

## 1900 – Dechrau'r Ganrif

Ychydig o adroddiadau ar Dal-y-bont fu yn y papur newydd lleol y *Cambrian News* ym 1900. Roedd y ddau westy yn cystadlu am gwsmeriaid, fel y gwnant hyd heddiw. Pryd bynnag yr hysbysebai'r Llew Du yn y papur newydd byddai hysbyseb ymron yn union yr un fath yn ymddangos wrth ei ochr am y Llew Gwyn fel pe baent yn efeilliaid anwahanadwy.

Cafodd gyrrwr wagen gyda dau geffyl ei ddirwyo gan Lys y Sesiwn Bach am yrru wagen gyda llwyth o goed heb oleuadau ac un arall am yrru heb awenau.

Fodd bynnag, byddai amharu ar fywyd gwledig Tal-y-bont gan 100 mlynedd o newidiadau na ellid – ar y pryd – eu dychmygu. Tra na effeithiwyd ar y pentref gan erwinder Chwyldro Diwydiannol y 19eg ganrif fel a welwyd yn ne Cymru ac yr oedd y diwydiannau lleol sef mwyngloddio a nyddu ymron a dirwyn i ben, roedd arwyddion bygythiol o'r gwrthdaro milwrol a fyddai'n cyffwrdd pob cartref.

Roedd y Rhyfel yn erbyn y Boeriaid yn cael ei ymladd yn Ne Affrica gyda chefnogaeth ton o wladgarwch a jingoistiaeth. Ymladdwyd y rhyfel hwn gan filwyr y Fyddin Barhaol rheolaidd, ac yr oedd erchyllterau rhyfel, boed yn fuddugoliaethau neu yn orchfygiadau, yn cael eu cuddio gan yr iaith a ddefnyddiwyd gan erthyglau mewn papurau newydd a chylchgronau. Roedd Catrawd Gymreig wedi ennill clod a'i le yn y llyfrau hanes yn Rorke's Drift yn erbyn cenedl y Zulus. Roedd gwleidydd o Gymro o'r enw Lloyd George wedi gwneud ei hun yn amhoblogaidd drwy wrthwynebu'r rhyfel yn erbyn y Boeriaid. Roedd Prydain yn 'Fawr'. Ychydig a sylweddolai pobl Tal-y-bont yr amser anodd a ddeuai 14 mlynedd yn ddiweddarach.

### Amser Rhyfel 1914–1918

Cafwyd rhybuddion cynnar yn y *Welsh Gazette*. Dywedodd y Golygydd yn rhifyn Gorffennaf 30, 1914:

*EUROPEAN CRISIS – DANGER OF WAR*  
*Europe is threatened with the prospect of a terrible war. The Austro-Serbian crisis –*

## 1900 – Start of the Century

The local newspaper, the *Cambrian News* had few reports on Tal-y-bont in 1900. The two hotels competed for trade, as they still do. Whenever the Black Lion advertised in the newspaper an almost identical advert appeared alongside from the White Lion as if they were inseparable twins.

The Petty Sessions Court fined a waggoner with two horses for driving a loaded timber waggon with no lights and another for driving without reins.

However, the rural life of Tal-y-bont was to be disrupted by 100 years of changes of – at the time – unimaginable dimensions. Whilst the village had escaped the harshness of the 19th Century Industrial Revolution experienced in south Wales and its own industrial enterprises of mining and weaving were reaching the final stage of decline, there were ominous signs of the forthcoming military conflicts which would reach into every home.

The Boer War was being waged in South Africa supported by a wave of patriotism and jingoism. Fought with regular Army soldiers, the horrors of war, whether victories or defeats, were camouflaged by the language used by newspaper and magazine articles. A Welsh Regiment had earned glory and its page in the history books at Rorke's Drift against the Zulu nation. A Welsh politician by the name of Lloyd George had hit a low in popularity by opposing the war against the Boers. Britain was 'Great'. Little did the people of Tal-y-bont realise that the testing time would come 14 years later.

### Wartime 1914–1918

Early warning signs emerged in the *Welsh Gazette*. In the July 30, 1914 issue the editor stated:

*EUROPEAN CRISIS – DANGER OF WAR*  
*Europe is threatened with the prospect of a terrible war. The Austro-Serbian crisis looked upon as the gravest since the war of 1870 has developed in startling manner.*

Five days later Great Britain declared war on Germany and the Editor advised, 'Don't

*looked upon as the gravest since the war of 1870 – has developed in startling manner.*

Pum diwrnod yn ddiweddarach cyhoeddodd Prydain Fawr ryfel yn erbyn yr Almaen a dywedodd y Golygydd, 'Don't panic', wrth i bobl ruthro i brynu a storio blawd a siwgr.

Mae'n rhaid fod yna lawer o weithgaredd yn lleol, gan fod ardal Gogledd Ceredigion yn ardal boblogaidd ar gyfer gwrsylloedd haf y Fyddin Diriogaethol ym misoedd Gorffennaf ac Awst. Adroddwyd

*... this is the absorbing topic in the village. Two well known men here have been called to join the colours, W. Williams (Postman) went to London to join the Grenadier Guards Reserve, Joel Jenkins, brother-in-law of Mr J. Morgan, went to Cardiff to join the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.*

Saith mis yn ddiweddarach wrth ysgrifennu llythyr i'w gartref ynglŷn â'i brofiadau yn y ffosydd dywedodd Joel Jenkins

*... nad oedd adroddiadau yn y papurau newydd ynglŷn â chyfnewid cacennau a thybaco yn wir o gwbl ar ei ffrynt ef. Yn fy*

panic' as there was a rush to stock up on flour and sugar..

Locally there must have been intense activity, because the North Ceredigion area was a popular area for the summer camps of the Territorial Army in July and August. It was reported that

*... this is the absorbing topic in the village. Two well known men here have been called to join the colours, W. Williams (Postman) went to London to join the Grenadier Guards Reserve, Joel Jenkins, brother-in-law of Mr J. Morgan, went to Cardiff to join the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.*

Writing home seven months later about his trench experience Joel Jenkins states:

*... that newspaper reports of the enemy exchanging cakes and tobacco were not true on his front. In my part it was bullets we exchanged with them, so I hope you do not believe all these letters.*

The launching of the bloody conflict in France of the 1914–1918 Great War was accompanied by a programme of recruitment of volunteers on a huge scale. Caught up in the enthusiasm being



*Swyddogion y Fyddin yn recriwtio dynion ifanc yr ardal ar y sgwâr o flaen y Llew Du. (E.O. Jones)*

*Army officers recruiting young men of the district on the square in front of the Black Lion. (E.O. Jones)*



*Evan James Edwards, David T. Morgan, David Jones (Pantycelyn), David Richard Edwards a Lewis Morris, gwasanaethwyr milwrol.*

*Evan James Edwards, David T. Morgan, David Jones (Pantycelyn), David Richard Edwards and Lewis Morris, servicemen.*



*E.S. Davies (Evy), Ceulan Stores.*



*Jo Edwards*

*rhan i bwledi a gyfnewidiwyd ganddynt, felly gobeithiaf nad ydych yn credu'r cyfan o'r llythyron hyn.*

Wrth i'r gwrthdaro gwaedlyd yn Ffrainc yn Rhyfel Mawr 1914–1918 ddechrau, cafwyd rhaglen recriwtio gwirfoddolwyr ar raddfa enfawr. Gyda'r brwdfrydedd a gafwyd yn effeithio arnynt, gwirfoddolodd nifer o ddynion ifanc oherwydd bod eu ffrindiau yn ymuno, neu oherwydd bod milwyr ifanc mewn iwnifform yn destun edmygedd. Magwyd brwdfrydedd hefyd gan rali recriwtio a gynhaliwyd yn ysgol Tal-y-bont, gydag anerchiad gan y Cadeirydd, Edward Jones Y.H. o Elgar House, y Parchedig Towyn Jones A.S., y Bargyfreithiwr David Rhys a Syr Edward Pryse o Gogerddan. O ganlyniad, perswadiwyd David John Davies, Jenkin Lewis Lloyd a John Price Richards i gymryd 'swllt y Brenin'.

Argraffwyd lluniau gan y *Cambrian News* o wirfoddolwyr, yn bennaf ar gyfer y Fyddin, yn eu gwisg filwrol o dan benawdau megis 'Milwr o Dal-y-bont', 'Teulu Milwrol Balch', 'Gynnwr o Dal-y-bont'. Ond cyfyngwyd ar y newydd o'r ymladd yn y ffosydd i ddarnau bychain o golofnau chwe modfedd, weithiau hyd yn oed llai. Cafwyd mwy o golofnau ar gyfer y nifer uchel o ddynion yng Nghymru, yn bennaf o'r gymuned amaethyddol a oedd yn ymddangos o flaen eu Tribiwnlys lleol yn gofyn am gael eu heithrio rhag gwasanaeth milwrol. Pan gyflwynwyd Consgripsiwn yn Ionawr 1916 dechreuodd realiti rhyfel gael effaith ar Dal-y-bont. Hyd at y dyddiad hwnnw, gelwid ar ddynion a oedd wedi 'tystio' (wedi eu cofrestru fel yn barod i wasanaethu os a phan fyddai angen). Wrth i'r lladdfa yn y ffosydd gynyddu, dirywiodd y dull hwn o recriwtio a daeth consgripsiwn yn ei le. O ganlyniad i'r orfodaeth hon i wasanaethu cynhaliodd Undeb Ffermwyr Sir Aberteifi gyfarfod yn Nhal-y-bont oherwydd yr ansicrwydd a oedd yn gysylltiedig â hyn. Roedd nifer heb 'dystio', nid oherwydd eu bod yn gwrthwynebu ond oherwydd teimlo nad oedd yn angenrheidiol. Roedd ffermwyr, dynion ceffylau, dynion gwartheg, towyr, dynion peiriannau a fformyn mewn swyddi a olygai eu bod yn cael eu heithrio.

Ceid sawl adroddiad trist o ffermwyr mewn oedran ac eraill yn gwirfoddoli i wynebu'r lladdfa fel y gallai eu meibion aros

generated, many young men volunteered because their friends were going, or because of the admiration bestowed on them as young soldiers in uniform. This enthusiasm was also generated by a recruitment rally in the schoolroom at Tal-y-bont addressed by the Chairman, Edward Jones J.P. of Elgar House, the Rev. Towyn Jones M.P., Barrister David Rhys and Sir Edward Pryse of Gogerddan. As a result David John Davies, Jenkin Lewis Lloyd and John Price Richards were persuaded to take the 'King's shilling'.

The *Cambrian News* printed photographs of volunteers, mainly for the Army, in their uniforms under such headings as 'Tal-y-bont Soldier', 'Proud Military Family', 'Tal-y-bont Gunner'. But the news of the fighting in the trenches was limited to snippets of six column inches, sometimes even less. Far more column inches were devoted to the large numbers of men in Wales, mainly from the farming community appearing before their local Tribunals seeking exemption from military service. With the introduction of Conscription in January 1916 the realities of war started to have an impact on Tal-y-bont. Up until that date men who 'attested' (registered a willingness to serve if and when required) were called on. As the slaughter in the trenches escalated, this method of recruitment declined and was replaced by conscription. As a result of this compulsion to serve the Cardiganshire Farmers Union held a meeting in Tal-y-bont because of the uncertainty involved. Many had not 'attested', not because they objected to do so, but because they thought it was unnecessary. Farmers, horsemen, cowmen, thatchers, enginemmen, foremen were in certified occupations and entitled to exemption.

There were many sad accounts of elderly farmers volunteering to face the slaughter so that their sons could stay at home to attend to the farm. Owen Williams of Tal-y-bont took the job of rural postman, releasing his two sons William Williams and David Williams to serve. But, on the other hand, there was a petition presented by 36 persons in Beddgelert:

*... strongly protesting against wholesale exemption and postponements granted by a Tribunal to young single and young married men engaged in work which could be done by older men.*

gartref i edrych ar ôl y fferm. Cymerodd Owen Williams, Tal-y-bont swydd fel postmon gwledig, gan ryddhau ei ddau fab William Williams a David Williams i wasanaethu. Ond ar y llaw arall cyflwynwyd deiseb gan 36 person o Feddgelert:

*... yn protestio yn gryf yn erbyn eithriadau a gohiriadau a roddwyd gan y Tribiwnlys i ddynion ifanc, sengl a rhai ifanc newydd briodi a oedd yn gwneud gwaith a ellid ei wneud gan ddynion hŷn.*

Chwaraeodd milwyr Cymreig ran flaenllaw yn nhrychineb Gallipoli, yn enwedig ym Mae Suvla, ac roedd nifer o'r portreadau yn y *Cambrian News* o ddynion lleol, a oedd yn gwasanaethu yn ardal Môr y Canoldir. 'Gwaith gwladgarol dros y Milwyr' yn Nhal-y-bont oedd y casgliad wyau a ddigwyddai bob pythefnos ac a anfonid i Ysbyty Netly. Casglwyd 150 wy ar Ddydd Mercher, Mai 19, 1916. Mewn deg mis casglwyd 6,801 wy. Ni welwyd prinder bwyd difrifol hyd 1917. Anogwyd ffermwyr a phobl leol i dyfu rhagor o datws er mwyn cwrdd â'r prinder bwyd drwy'r wlad.

Cyhuddwyd ffermwyr o fod yn farus oherwydd iddynt wneud elw afresymol yn ystod y rhyfel ac edrych ar ôl eu buddiannau eu hunain tra bod dynion ifanc y wlad yn cael eu lladd yn ffosydd Ffrainc a Gallipoli. Bu cynnydd o 65% ym mhreis cig, llaeth ac ymenyn erbyn 1916 a dyblodd y prisiau eto erbyn 1918. Yr enw difriol a roddwyd ar ffermwyr Ceredigion yn ystod Rhyfel 1914–1918 oedd 'Locustiaid Ceredigion'. Cwyn a wnaethpwyd yn fynych oedd fod meibion ffermydd yn dychwelyd o'u swyddi yn y dref i weithio ar y ffermydd er mwyn osgoi consgripsiwn i'r fyddin. Disodlwyd nifer o weithwyr ar y ffermydd gan feibion fferm ac o ganlyniad gorfodwyd y gweithwyr fferm, sef y werin, gan y tribiwnlys i ymuno â'r fyddin.

Adlewyrchai llythyr yn y *Welsh Gazette* ym mis Ebrill 1918 gan 'Cottager o Geulanamaesmawr' safbwynt y dyn cyffredin.

*Mae ein Milwyr a'n Morwyr ar hyn o bryd yn ymladd ac yn dioddef y caledi mwyaf posibl, ac yn rhoi eu bywydau er mwyn amddiffyn eu gwlad. Mae'r Llywodraeth yn annog y rhai sydd gartref am fwy o ymroddiad, ac am ychydig o aberth i gynorthwyo i ennill y*

The Welsh soldiers had played a major role in the Gallipoli fiasco, especially at Suvla Bay, and many of the portraits in the *Cambrian News* were of local men who were serving in the Mediterranean area. Tal-y-bont's 'Patriotic work for the Soldiers' was the fortnightly egg collection to be sent to Netly Hospital, 150 eggs were collected on Wednesday, May 19, 1916. In ten months 6,801 eggs had been collected. Severe food shortages did not emerge until 1917. Farmers and local people were urged to grow more potatoes to supplement the shortage of food throughout the country.

Farmers were accused of being greedy because they made unreasonable profits during the war and of looking after their own interests while the country's young men were being killed in the trenches of France and Gallipoli. There was a 65 per cent increase in the price of meat, milk and butter by 1916 and the prices doubled again by 1918. 'Ceredigion Locusts' is the disparaging nickname given to Ceredigion farmers during the 1914–1918 War. A complaint that was frequently heard was that farmers' sons returned from their work in the towns to work on the farms in order to avoid conscription to the army. Several sons displaced the farm workers with the result that the ordinary farm workers (y werin) were forced by the tribunals to join the army.

A letter in Welsh in the *Welsh Gazette* in April 1918 by 'A Ceulanamaesmawr Cottager' reflects the viewpoint of the common man.

*Our soldiers and sailors are fighting and suffering great hardship and giving their lives in defence of their country. The Government is urging those at home to be more committed and to make sacrifices to help in winning the War. Farmers, like all other classes, are asked to suffer hardship are they not? They are allowed to keep their sons and workers at home. The price of their food has risen by 100% and yet they are not content.*

*In this county, in a recent meeting of farmers they had the audacity to unanimously adopt a suggestion to have the right to double the cost, for planting potatoes, to villagers and small holders whose husbands, sons and brothers are defending our homes and fighting for justice.*

*Rhyfel. Oni ofynnir i'r ffermwyr oddef caledi fel pob dosbarth arall? Caniateir iddynt gadw eu meibion a'u gweision gartref. Y mae prisiau eu nwyddau wedi codi dros 100%; ac eto nid ydynt wedi eu bodloni!*

*Yn y sir hon, mewn cyfarfod diweddar o'r ffermwyr roedd ganddynt yr hyfdra i fabwysiadu yn ddiwrthwynebiad gynnig i hawlio ddwywaith y pris blaenorol am blannu tatws oddi wrth pentrefwyr a thyddynwyr tlawd sydd â'u gwŷr, meibion a'u brodyr yn amddiffyn ein cartrefi ac yn ymladd am gyfiawnder.*

*Nawr rydw i o'r farn bod hwn yn annheg a dideimlad ar ran y ffermwyr. Dylem fod yn ddiolchgar am ymyrraeth y Gweinidog Bwydydd, neu erbyn hyn, byddai prisiau cynnyrch y ffermwyr yn anhygoel. Sut y gallant gyfiawnhau eu hymddygiad pan mae rhenti a threthi yn sefydlog a gyda'r dosbarthiadau tlotaf prin yn medru sicrhau'r anghenion moel i'w cynnal? Heb amheuaeth mae'r ffermwyr yn gwneud eu ffortiwn.'*

Ar gyfer y perthnasau hynny a oedd eu heisiau yr oedd y *Cambrian News* yn hysbysebu ar gyfer eu gwerthu:

*ROLLS OF HONOUR for king and country to be sold to Sunday Schools, Political and Working Men's Clubs, Factories and Workshops, Friendly Societies and Kindred Organisations in recognition of members who have responded to the call to serve their King and Country in the War.*

Dechreuodd mwyfwy o luniau o filwyr ymddangos yn y *Cambrian News* ac roedd y geiriau tanynt yn cyfeirio at rai wedi eu hanafu, ar goll, wedi eu lladd neu gartref gyda chaniatâd ar ôl cael eu hanafu. Dyma ychydig wybodaeth am ddynion o Dal-y-bont:

Lladdwyd Preifat John Jones, mab Mr a Mrs Jonathan Jones, teiliwr o Benlôn mewn brwydr yn y Dwyrain.

Lladdwyd Preifat Rowland Humphreys yng Nghoedwig Marriets.

Un o'r cyntaf i listio oedd Preifat Parker, Cyffinwyr De Cymru, a anfonwyd adref o'r ffrynt wedi ei anafu yn ddifrifol gan ffrywdryn yn Loos. Dychwelodd i'w gartref gyda Mr a Mrs Evans o Lerry Stores.

Roedd Preifat Humphrey Jones o Braichgarw a James Morgan yn ddiweddar o Alltddu gartref gyda chaniatâd.

*I am of the opinion that the farmers are unfair and unfeeling. One should be thankful for the intervention of the Food Minister, otherwise by now the prices of farmers' produce would be incredible. How can they justify their behaviour when rent and taxes are fixed and with the poorest classes only just securing the bare necessities for survival? Without a doubt the farmers are making their fortune.*

For those relatives who wanted them the *Cambrian News* advertised for sale:

*ROLLS OF HONOUR for King and Country to be sold to Sunday Schools, Political and Working Men's Clubs, Factories and Workshops, Friendly Societies and Kindred Organisations in recognition of members who have responded to the call to serve their King and Country in the War.*

More and more photographs of serving soldiers started to appear in the paper and the captions recorded wounded, missing, killed or home on leave after being wounded. Here is some information on Tal-y-bont men:

Private John Jones, son of Mr and Mrs Jonathan Jones, tailor of Penlôn, was killed in action in the East.

Private Rowland Humphreys was killed at Marriets Wood.

Private Parker of South Wales Borderers, who was one of the first to enlist, was invalided home after being seriously wounded by a mine at Loos. He returned to his home with Mr and Mrs Evans of Lerry Stores.

Private Humphrey Jones of Braichgarw and James Morgan late of Alltddu were reported to be home on leave.

Lt. Tom Thomas was killed in action. He was the youngest son of Mr and Mrs D.R. Thomas and falsified his age whilst at Jesus College, Oxford in order to enlist.

Jack Jenkins of Bwlchroser, Bontgoch joined the Army at 16 and became the pet of his regiment, being nicknamed 'Ffarmwr Bach'. He was seriously wounded by a British shell landing short.

A more detailed picture of Ernest Williams emerges. He was a 'Champion Reciter' and a master tailor in Tal-y-bont who applied for absolute exemption on the grounds that his services were necessary to the neighbourhood. He claimed that if he

Lladdwyd Lefftenant Tom Thomas mewn brwydr. Ef oedd mab ieuengaf Mr a Mrs D.R. Thomas. Rhoddodd oedran anghywir tra yng Ngholeg yr Iesu, Rhydychen, er mwyn listio.

Ymunodd Jack Jenkins o Bwlchroser, Bontgoch â'r Fyddin pan oedd yn 16 oed a daeth yn ffeffryn ei gatrawd, gan gael ei enwi'n 'Ffarmwr Bach'. Cafodd ei anafu yn ddifrifol gan ffrwydryn Prydeinig a laniodd yn fyr o'i darged.

Ceir darlun mwy manwl o Ernest Williams. Yr oedd yn 'Bencampwr Adrodd' ac yn brifdeiliwr yn Nhal-y-bont a wnaeth gais am gael ei eithrio yn gyfan gwbl ar y sail fod ei waith yn angenrheidiol i'r gymdogaeth. Honnai pe bai yn cael ei alw i fyny byddai ei fusnes a sefydlwyd tri deg mlynedd yn flaenorol yn cael ei ddifetha. Pan ailymddangosodd o flaen Tribiwnlys, dywedodd ei fod wedi ailystyried y mater ac iddo ddod i'r canlyniad fod yn rhaid iddo wneud rhywbeth dros ei wlad. Yr oedd yn barod i aberthu ei fusnes. Gofynnodd wedyn am bythefnos er mwyn trefnu ei faterion busnes a gwerthu ei dŷ a'i ddodrefn. Gwnaeth hyn gymaint o argraff ar Gadeirydd y Tribiwnlys (Mr Wilkinson) fel iddo ddod allan o du ôl i ford y Tribiwnlys, ysgwyd llaw Mr Williams a dweud (yn rhyfedd) 'You are the only one of the lot who has the pluck of a mouse' (sic).

### Dyn o Dal-y-bont yn Awstralia

Ysgrifnodd Mr R.O. Morgan o Ipswich, Queensland, Awstralia:

*I thought it would be of interest to old friends in Aberystwyth, especially Tal-y-bont, to know that two from Tal-y-bont have enlisted with the Australian Expeditionary Forces. The two are Mr S.O. Morgan and myself (R.O. Morgan), sons of the late Mr and Mrs David Morgan, blacksmith of Tal-y-bont. S.O. is in the Engineers, R.O. is in the Army Service Corps. We both feel proud of having done so as representing Tal-y-bont in Australia.*

Ar Ebrill 28, 1916 adroddwyd:

*On Wednesday morning much excitement was caused by the departure of the last batch of young men eligible for the Army:*

*Messers: Evan Williams, The Shop  
Humphrey Jones, Braichgarw*

were called up his business established thirty years ago would be ruined. When he re-appeared before the Tribunal, he said he had reconsidered the matter and had come to the conclusion that he must do something for his country. He was prepared to sacrifice his business. He therefore asked for a fortnight in which to arrange his business affairs and dispose of his house and furniture. The Chairman of the Tribunal (a Mr Wilkinson) was so impressed by this that he came from behind the Tribunal table, shook Mr Williams's hand and commented (oddly) 'You are the only one of the lot who has the pluck of a mouse' (sic).

### Tal-y-bont man in Australia

Mr R.O. Morgan wrote from Ipswich, Queensland, Australia:

*I thought it would be of interest to old friends in Aberystwyth, especially Tal-y-bont, to know that two from Tal-y-bont have enlisted with the Australian Expeditionary Forces. The two are Mr S.O. Morgan and myself (R.O. Morgan) sons of the late Mr and Mrs David Morgan, blacksmith of Tal-y-bont. S.O. is in the Engineers, R.O. is in the Army Service Corps. We both feel proud of having done so as representing Tal-y-bont in Australia.*

On April 28, 1916 it was reported that:

*On Wednesday morning much excitement was caused by the departure of the last batch of young men eligible for the Army:*

*Messrs: Evan Williams, The Shop  
Humphrey Jones, Braichgarw  
Joe Edwards  
Ben Thomas, Defrhyddlan  
Richard Rowlands  
James Morgan, Alltddu  
Goronwy Morgan*

*They left at an early hour for Newport, Monmouthshire. Being a popular lot a large number of inhabitants turned out and gave them a hearty send-off.*

*It is sad to note that the place is now denuded of all its young manhood, not a single man left of military age with the exception of farm hands.*

1917 saw a big increase in the number of portraits printed in the *Cambrian News* following the slaughter on the Somme.

Joe Edwards  
Ben Thomas, Defrhyddlan  
Richard Rowlands  
James Morgan, Alltddu  
Goronwy Morgan

*They left at an early hour for Newport, Monmouthshire. Being a popular lot a large number of inhabitants turned out and gave them a hearty send-off.*

*It is sad to note the place is now denuded of all its young manhood, not a single man left of military age with the exception of farm hands.*

Ym 1917 gwelwyd cynnydd yn y nifer o luniau a argraffwyd yn y *Cambrian News* yn dilyn y gyflafan ar y Somme. Roedd colledion trwm ym Mrwydr Mametz pan gollodd y Fyddin Gymreig 4,000 o ddynion mewn 5 diwrnod.

Adroddodd *Papur Pawb* ym mis Medi, 1987:

*Yr haf eleni dychwelodd rhai o'r cyn-filwyr (i gyd dros eu 90 oed erbyn hyn) i ddadorchuddio cofeb arbennig i'r rhai a laddwyd yn y frwydr honno.*

*Darllodwyd rhaglen Gymraeg ar y 19 Gorffennaf ar S4C i goffáu'r trychineb hwnnw saith deg o flynyddau'n ôl, ac un o'r rhai a gymerodd ran yn y rhaglen oedd Mr Caledfryn Evans. Clywsom fel y bu iddo*

There were very heavy losses in the Battle of Mametz where the Welsh Army lost over 4,000 men in 5 days.

*Papur Pawb* of September 1987 reported:

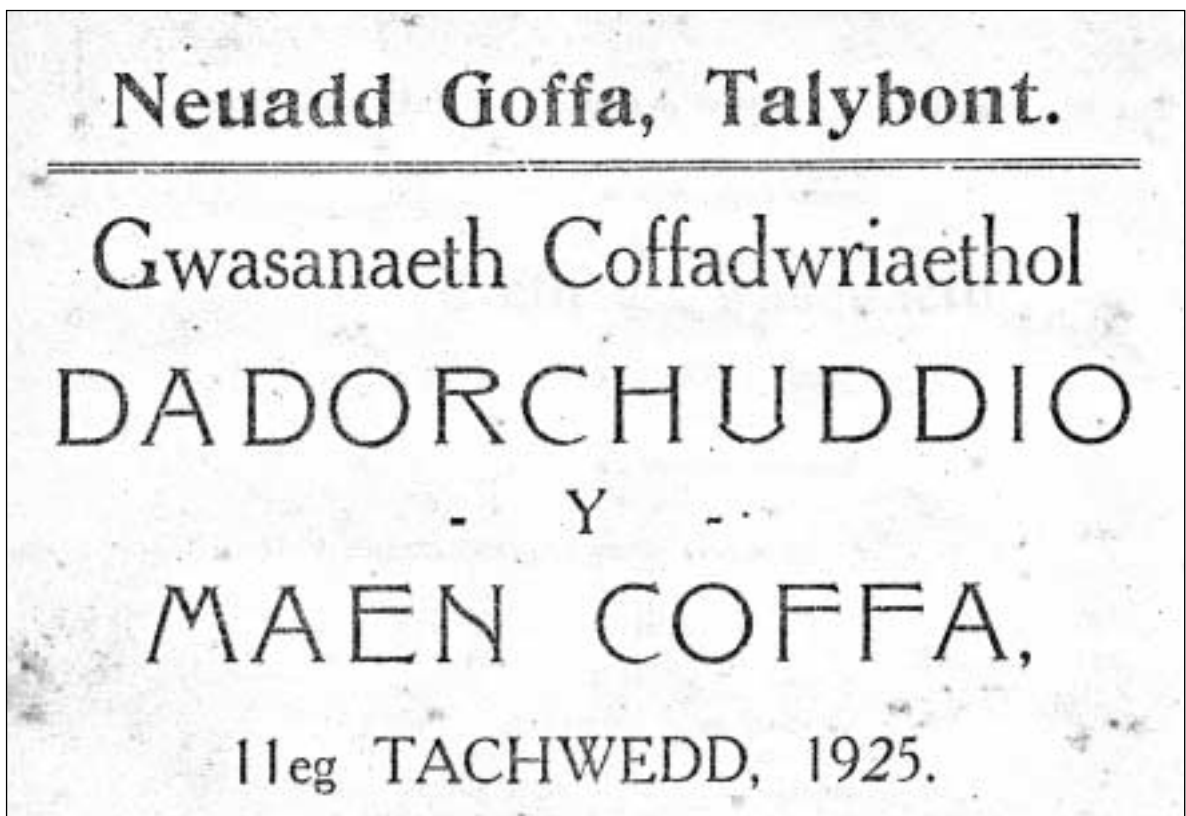
*This summer some of the ex-soldiers (all over 90 years of age) returned to unveil a special memorial to those who were killed in the battle. On July 19 there was a Welsh language programme on S4C to commemorate this disaster of 70 years ago.*

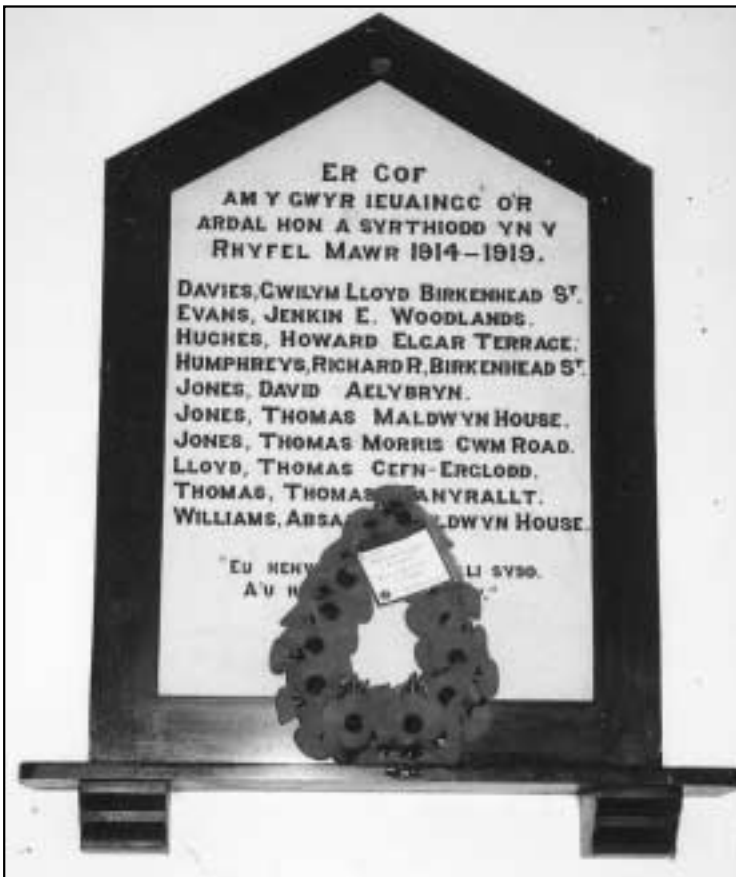
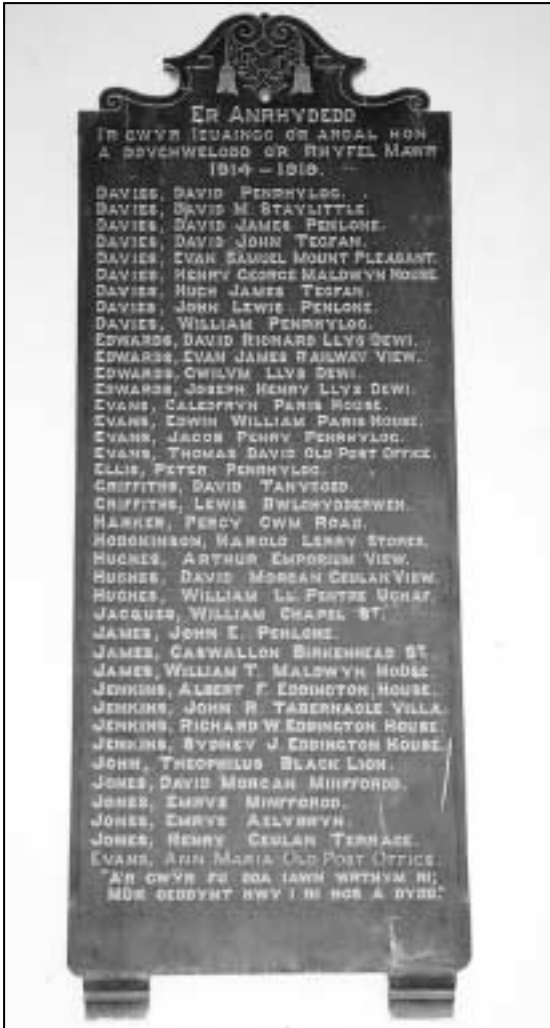
*Taking part in the programme was Mr Caledfryn Evans who joined the Army as an inexperienced 18 year old, trained in a camp near Rhyl before crossing to the Somme where he witnessed horrific fighting.*

The names of those who lost their lives are carved on marble and stone monuments in many villages and towns throughout Wales. The names of the Ceulanamaesmawr men who lost their lives and the names of those who returned safely are recorded in the *Neuadd Goffa*. We, the producers of this Millenium book, commemorate their service and sacrifice.

Sadly, the names of some of the men who sacrificed their lives are not on the memorial.

In *Papur Pawb*, June 1981 Hilda Thomas, Cwmere wrote:





*Nodwedd anghyffredin: yr enwau ar y ddwy gofeb uchod yw'r rheini a ddychwelodd yn ddiogel, y rhai ar y gofeb isod a gollodd eu bywydau.*

*An unusual feature: the names on the two tablets at the top are those who returned safely, those on the tablet at the bottom are those who lost their lives.*

*ymuno â'r fyddin yn llanc dibrofiad, deunaw oed, yr ymarfer mewn gwersyll ger y Rhyl cyn croesi i'r Somme lle bu'n dyst o'r brwydro erchyll.*

Mae enwau'r rhai a gollodd eu bywydau wedi eu cerfio ar gofgolofnau marmor a charreg mewn llawer pentref a thref ledled Cymru. Mae enwau dynion Ceulanamaesmawr a gollodd eu bywydau ac enwau'r rhai a ddychwelodd yn ddiogel wedi eu rhestru yn y Neuadd Goffa. Yr ydym ni, cynhyrchwyr y llyfr Mileniwm hwn, yn coffáu eu gwasanaeth a'u haberth.

Mae'n drist nodi nad yw enwau rhai o'r dynion a aberthodd eu bywyd ar y gofeb. Yn *Papur Pawb* ym Mis Mehefin, 1981 ysgrifennodd Hilda Thomas, Cwmere:

*Pan fydd casglu arian tuag at y Neuadd Goffa cynhwysir pentref Bontgoch, eto i gyd ni welwyd yn dda i roddi enwau dau o fechgyn y pentref a laddwyd yn Rhyfel Mawr 1914–1918 ar y maen coffa. Paham tybed gan fod Bontgoch yn yr un plwyf â Thal-y-bont? Y ddau oedd: Mr Arthur Morris, Elerch House a Mr William Henry Edwards, Lerry View.*

Yn *Papur Pawb* bedwar mis yn ddiweddarach ysgrifennodd Hilda Thomas:

*Pan fu y Dr I. Ll. Edwards a'i deulu ar eu gwyliau yn Ffrainc yn ystod yr haf, aethant i ymweld â mynwent fikwrol Saily Sur La Lys. Yno y claddwyd ewyrth iddo, sef unig frawd Mrs Griffiths, Glyntuen, Tal-y-bont. Mab oedd William Henry Edwards i'r diweddar Morgan ac Elisabeth Edwards, Lerry View, Bontgoch. Bu farw o'i glwyfau ar Fai 19fed 1915. Glöwr oedd yn y De cyn iddo ymuno a'r Lluoedd Arfog, a'r tro olaf y bu adref o'r fyddin am seibiant oedd Rhagfyr 1914 pryd yr aeth ef a'i chwaer i Eisteddfod Nadolig Bethel.*

*Yr oedd ei dad wedi marw yn 1912 ac felly ef oedd 'ffon fara' y teulu ac roedd ganddo chwaer arall Milcah oedd yn analluog o'i geni.*

*Mae'r entw yn dal yn eglur ar y garreg ar ôl 66 o flynyddoedd. Cedwir y fynwent yn lân a hardd a blodau ymhob cwr ohoni. Mae ei chwaer Mrs Griffiths yn falch iawn ar ôl cyfnod mor faith o gael gwybod iddo gael bedd a charreg i gofnodi y fan lle gorffwys.*

Ni ddylid tanbrisiu effaith y rhyfel ar bentref bychan fel Bontgoch. Gellir dychmygu'r cwmwl du o anobaith a galar

*When a collection towards the Neuadd Goffa is made, the village of Bontgoch is included. Yet the names of two young men of the village who were killed in the Great War 1914–1918 are not included on the memorial stone. I wonder why as Bontgoch is in the same parish as Tal-y-bont? The two were Mr Arthur Morris, Elerch House and Mr William Henry Edwards, Lerry View.*

Four months later in *Papur Pawb* Hilda Thomas reported:

*When Dr I.Ll. Edwards and his family were on holiday in France during the summer of 1981 they visited the military cemetery at Saily Sur La Lys where his uncle was buried. William Henry Edwards was the only brother of Mrs Griffiths, Glyntuen, Tal-y-bont and the son of the late Morgan and Elisabeth Edwards, Lerry View, Bontgoch. He died of his wounds on May 19, 1915. He was a south Wales miner before joining the Armed Forces. The last time he was home on leave in December 1914 he went with his sister to the Christmas Eisteddfod in Bethel.*

*His father died in 1912 and therefore he was the family's bread winner. He had another sister, Milcah, who was disabled from birth.*

*The name on the headstone is still clear after 66 years and the cemetery is kept clean and beautiful with flowers in every corner. His sister Mrs Griffiths was very pleased to learn, after such a long period of time, that a grave and stone commemorates his resting place.*

The impact of the war on a small hamlet like Bontgoch should not be underestimated. One can imagine the black cloud of grief and despair on the death of Mr John Roberts, The Mill. He left a wife, one daughter and three sons and as the Warden of St Peter's Church, the whole congregation would have mourned his passing.

Many others, like Caledfryn Evans who served in Flanders and was wounded in one of the battles of the Somme, returned to their home villages and contributed substantially to the religious and cultural life of the villages. Others suffered shell shock (now known as Post Traumatic Stress syndrome) reviving memories of the horrors of war experiences.

The following information appeared in the *Cambrian News*:

pan fu farw Mr John Roberts y Felin. Gadawodd wraig, un ferch a thri mab ac fel Warden Eglwys Sant Pedr, byddai'r gynulleidfa gyfan wedi galaru ar ei ôl.

Roedd nifer o rai eraill, fel Caledfryn Evans a wasanaethodd yn Fflandrys ac a gafodd ei anafu mewn brwydr ar y Somme, wedi dychwelyd i'w pentrefi gan gyfrannu'n sylweddol i fywyd crefyddol a diwylliannol y pentrefi. Dioddefodd eraill o siel-syfrdandod (a elwir yn awr yn syndrom 'Post Traumatic Stress') sydd yn dod yn ôl ag atgofion o erchyllterau profiadau rhyfel.

Ymddangosodd y gwybodaeth canlynol yn y *Cambrian News*:

*Cafodd Gynnwr Joe Edwards (Llys Dewi) anafiadau difrifol. Dychwelodd adref ar ôl ei ryddhau o'r ysbyty. Anafwyd ei frawd ieuengaf Gwilym hefyd. Roedd gan Mr a Mrs Edwards bedwar mab yn y Fyddin.*

*Anafwyd Preifat Willie Hughes, Corfflu'r Arloeswyr Cymreig, rhyw ychydig.*

*Ysgrifennodd Sarsiant Arthur Williams i ddweud na ddychwelodd Dick Humphreys a Tommy Jones o'r ymosodiad diweddar ar safle Almaenig.*

*Cafodd Is-Lefftenant Herbert Lewis, mab hynaf Fferm Tyngraig, ei glwyfo.*

*Lladdwyd Preifat Tommy Lloyd (Cefn Erglodd) ac roedd ei frawd hyn ar goll.*

*Roedd Is-Lefftenant Thomas, a anafwyd yn yr Eidal, yn garcharor rhyfel yn yr Almaen.*

*Anafwyd Sarsiant John Jones o Benrhylog a derbyniodd Fedal Filwrol a Medal am Ymddygiad Neilltuol am ei ddewrder.*

Mae galar y pentref yn amlwg yn yr adroddiad hwn, dyddiedig 21ain o Fawrth 1918, ynglŷn â marwolaeth Preifat Tommy Lloyd o Gefn Erglodd:

*It was with profound sorrow that Tal-y-bont and district received sad tidings of the death from wounds received in action of Private Tommy Lloyd of the Welsh Guards. His father Mr Isaac Lloyd, Cefn Erglodd, Tal-y-bont received a communication from the War Office. Private Lloyd volunteered early in the war for the Army ... he being the second son for them to be lost in this great war, their elder son being reported missing. In Bethel chapel the 'Dead March' was played on the organ and many in the congregation would recall his patriotic speech made at the concert in the school whilst on leave in January.*

*Gunner Joe Edwards (Llys Dewi) was severely wounded. He returned home after being discharged from hospital. His younger brother Gwilym was also wounded. Mr and Mrs Edwards gave four sons to the Army.*

*Private Willie Hughes, Welsh Pioneers, was slightly wounded.*

*Sgt Arthur Williams wrote to say that Dick Humphreys, Birkenhead Street and Tommy Jones did not return from a recent attack on a German position.*

*Second Lieutenant Herbert Lewis, the eldest son of Tyngraig Farm was a casualty.*

*Private Tommy Lloyd (Cefn Erglodd) was killed and his elder brother missing.*

*Second Lieutenant Thomas, wounded in Italy, was a prisoner of war in Germany.*

*Sergeant John Jones of Penrhylog was wounded and was awarded the Military Medal and the Distinguished Conduct Medal for bravery.*

The collective grief of the village is evident in this report on March 21, 1918 of the death of Private Tommy Lloyd of Cefn Erglodd:

*It was with profound sorrow that Tal-y-bont and district received the sad tidings of the death from wounds received in action of Private Tommy Lloyd of the Welsh Guards. His father Mr Isaac Lloyd, Cefn Erglodd, Tal-y-bont received a communication from the War Office. Private Lloyd volunteered early in the war for the Army ... he being the second son for them to be lost in this great war, their elder son being reported missing. In Bethel chapel the 'Dead March' was played on the organ and many in the congregation would recall his patriotic speech made at a concert in the school whilst on leave in January.*

There were some lighter moments to life in the village during this period. Concerts were held to welcome the 'Boys' back home or on leave. A concert held in Bethel Chapel for comforts for the soldiers listed patriotic songs such 'Keep the Home Fires Burning', 'Hearts of Oak' and even 'penillion' to Lord Kitchener. At the concerts as each soldier stood up and was welcomed he was loudly cheered, especially the Australians Private George Potter and Private Teddy Williams visiting the land of their parents.

One would have expected the wounded soldiers to have a warm welcome at the

Roedd yna rai cyfnodau ysgafnach ym mywyd y pentref yn ystod y cyfnod hwn. Cynhaliwyd cyngherddau er mwyn croesawu'r 'bechgyn' adref neu ar wyliau. Cynhaliwyd cyngerdd yng Nghapel Bethel er mwyn darparu cysuron i'r milwyr a chanwyd caneuon gwladgarol megis, 'Keep the Home Fires Burning', 'Hearts of Oak' a hyd yn oed penillion i'r Arglwydd Kitchener.

Yn ystod y cyngherddau wrth i bob milwr sefyll i fyny a'i groesawu, bloeddiwyd cymeradwyaeth, yn enwedig i'r Awstraliaid Preifat George Potter a Phreifat Teddy Williams a oedd yn ymweld â gwlad eu rhieni.

Byddid yn disgwyl i'r milwyr a anafwyd gael croeso cynnes yn y Llew Du a'r Llew Gwyn lle byddai'r cwrw yn llifo'n hael. Ond nid dyna fel y bu. Roedd 'tretio' yn drosedd o dan Ddeddf Amddiffyn y Deyrnas a defnyddiwyd plismyn heb iwniform mewn un achos yn y Llew Du er mwyn ceisio dal troseddwyd. Cyfyngwyd milwyr wedi eu hanafu i brynu eu lemonêd eu hunain neu wynebu dirwy drom. Yn ddiau nid oedd y Llywodraeth am weld milwyr yn meddwi a sôn wrth y cyhoedd am y gyflafan ar y Ffrynt.

Dim ond un ferch mewn iwniform y sonnir amdani yn ystod cyfnod y rhyfel. Ymddangosodd llun yn y *Cambrian News* o Mrs Langford, merch Mrs Annwyl, Neuadd Penpompren, a wasanaethai fel Uwcharolygydd a Swyddog Cydfydio Rhif 3 Ysgol Cadets Swyddogion RFA.

Roedd blynyddoedd y rhyfel yn dirwyn i ben gydag arwyddion o anobaith. Er mwyn codi arian cafwyd 'Wythnos Arfau Rhyfel' gydag 'arf arswydus' newydd – tanc anferth (a elwid yn Julian) yn mynd ar daith drwy Geredigion gyda siaradwyr yn annerch y dorf o ben y tanc. Cynhaliwyd 'Wythnos Awyrennau'. Sefydlwyd Gweinyddiaeth Gwasanaeth Cenedlaethol ac nid oedd gweithwyr amaethyddol mwyach yn cael eu heithrio. Roedd angen cwota o 425 o ddynion o blith gweithwyr fferm yng Ngheredigion. Byddai rhai wedi eu tynnu o'r ffermydd o gwmpas Tal-y-bont a Bontgoch. Roedd trafodaethau hefyd yn y Senedd i godi oedran milwrol i 50.

### **Newid agwedd**

Daeth newidiadau yn sgîl y blynyddoedd o frwydro a daeth hyn yn amlwg erbyn Mai 1918. Adfywiwyd Undebau Llafur ac roedd Mr Chapple o Undeb y Gweithwyr,

Black Lion and the White Lion with the beer flowing freely. But that was not so. 'Treating' was an offence under the Defence of the Realm Act and plain clothes policemen were used in one incident at the Black Lion to try to trap offenders. Wounded soldiers were restricted to buying their own lemonade or facing a heavy fine. No doubt the Government did not want soldiers getting drunk and informing the population of the carnage at the Front.

Only one uniformed woman is mentioned during the period of the war. A photograph appeared in the *Cambrian News* of Mrs Langford, daughter of Mrs Annwyl, Penpompren Hall, who served as Superintendent and Messing Officer of No.3 RFA Officer Cadet School.

The war years drew to a close with signs of desperation. To raise funds a 'War Weapons Week' was held with the new 'terror weapon' – a huge tank (named 'Julian') – touring Ceredigion with speakers addressing the crowd from the top of the tank. An 'Aircraft Week' was held. A Ministry of National Service was set up and the non-exemption of agricultural workers was introduced. A 'comb-out' of farm workers required a quota of 425 men from the farms of Cardiganshire. Some would have been drawn from the farms surrounding Tal-y-bont and Bontgoch. There were also discussions in Parliament for the military age to be raised to 50.

### **Changing attitudes**

The years of conflict brought about changes which became evident by May 1918. Trade Unionism revived and a Mr Chapple of the Workmen's Union from Cardiff was making enquiries into the condition of agricultural labourers in Wales. He addressed a well attended meeting of the local 100 strong branch of 'Undeb y Gweithwyr' at Tal-y-bont on a Saturday night. Politicians were limbering up for a General Election and there were signs that there was a staggering to peace – 'staggering' because no conclusive armistice date seems to have emerged.

It was reported on 31st October 1918 that:

*Among our soldiers recently welcomed home at Evening Concerts were Pte Gwilym Edwards (RAMC), L/cpl David Hughes (Welsh Regt), Sapper D. John Jones (Royal*

Caerdydd, yn archwilio cyflwr y llafurwyr amaethyddol yng Nghymru. Anerchodd gyfarfod gyda llawer yn bresennol o gangen leol Undeb y Gweithwyr a oedd â 100 aelod, yn Nhal-y-bont, ar un nos Sadwrn. Roedd gwleidyddion yn paratoi ar gyfer Etholiad Cyffredinol ac roedd arwyddion fod gwegian tuag at heddwch – ‘gwegian’ oherwydd nid ymddangosai fod yna ddyddiad cadoediad pendant wedi ei benodi. Adroddwyd ar Hydref 31, 1918:

*Among our soldiers recently welcomed home at Evening Concerts were Pte Gwilym Edwards (RAMC) L/cpl David Hughes (Welsh Regt), Sapper D. John Jones (Royal Engineers) and Pte John of Penpompren Hall.*

Cafwyd llawenhau gyda Mrs Morgan o Stryd Birkenhead pan dderbyniodd lythyr yn dweud bod ei gŵr Preifat D.T. Morgan a fu yn garcharor rhyfel yn yr Almaen ers Mawrth 1918 wedi ei ryddhau a'i fod yng Ngwlad Belg ac yn cael ei groesawu a'i fwydo gan bobl Gwlad Belg.

Nid oes amheuaeth yn awr yn y flwyddyn 2000 fod y 'rhyfel i orffen pob rhyfel' yn wastraff ofnadwy o fywydau dynol. Roedd ffurfio'r Mudiad Heddwch, sydd yn parhau i ddatblygu heddiw, yn ymateb i'r gyflafan.

*Jim Hammonds*

*Engineers) and Pte John of Penpompren Hall.*

There was rejoicing when Mrs Morgan of Birkenhead Street heard that her husband Pte D.T. Morgan who had been a prisoner of war in Germany since March 1918 had been released and was in Belgium being welcomed and fed by the Belgians.

There is no doubt now in the year 2000 that the 'War to end all Wars' was a terrible waste of human lives. The formation of a Peace Movement, which is still evolving today, was a reaction to the carnage.

*Jim Hammonds*